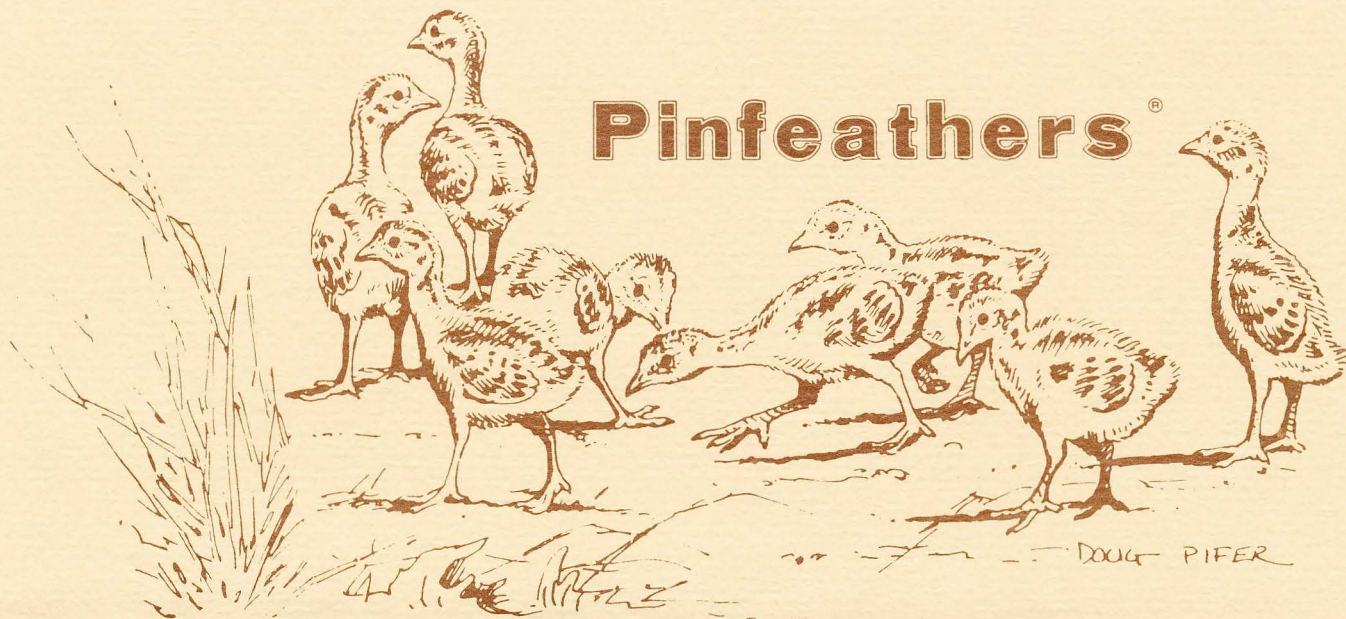


Pinfeathers®



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PASSING IT ON...

By now most of you have read accounts of the restoration success and expansion of the wild turkey range into states where it was not native.

Your grandfathers were probably already adults before they knew about turkey hunting. They learned about the sport the hard way — from experience. What they learned and enjoyed about turkey hunting they passed on to their sons who are in turn teaching you.

From generation to generation also is passed the knowledge of wildlife conservation and stewardship for the land and environment, our natural resources.

Let us hope there will always be areas of land where we can call the wild turkey whether armed with binoculars, a camera, or a gun. The wild turkey is part of our great American heritage.

You, as JAKES members of the National Wild Turkey Federation, have a commitment to learn and expand your knowledge of the wild turkey then pass it on.

—The Editor



Five-year-old Charlie Amy practices calling turkey with a box call, a gift from his father Bruce.



Ray Amy and grandson Charlie, both of Corry, PA, prepare for a day of scouting in the turkey woods.



U. S. Forest Service

These professional game managers are using an instrument called a drip torch to start a prescribed fire in a southern pine forest. The torch contains a mixture of diesel fuel and gasoline which drops as a flame to forest liter.

Controlled Burning

**—an almost indispensable tool for use in practical
wild turkey management. . .**

By Mary Kennamer

"The use of fire as a tool in land management is as old as man's knowledge of fire," according to Ken Arney, staff forester for the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, in a 1978 article on "Prescribed Burning".

Early English settlers found the American Indian using fire to keep woods open thus improving accessibility for hunting. The settlers adopted this practice and expanded it to improve the woods for livestock grazing and open land for agriculture.

Indiscriminate use of fire left

much forestland unproductive and by the early 1900s, professional foresters began advocating the exclusion of fire from forests.

But by the 1930s some foresters were initiating research programs aimed at determining the effects of prescribed fires or controlled burning in forests.

In 1963, the late Herbert L. Stoddard, Sr., founder of the Tall Timbers Research Station in Tallahassee, said in a research bulletin, "Controlled fire is an almost indispensable tool for use in practical wild turkey management in the southeastern coastal plain, both to regulate

cover for the birds and to make their hunting a pleasant pastime rather than grueling labor."

Arney says today prescribed burning is "an established resource management tool in various parts of the country" as well.

Controlled fire or prescribed burning is defined as: "fire applied in a skillful manner by a professional land manager to fuels of the forest or field, in a definite place, for a specific purpose, and under exacting weather conditions to achieve management objectives."

It can be done in either winter or

summer depending upon the objectives of the burn. A hot summer burn results in the killing of more vegetation and is used to prepare a site to take advantage of fall seed production. Cooler winter burns only girdle small seedlings and saplings enabling them to sprout the following spring and summer with stronger vegetative growth.

"Prescribed burning improves wildlife habitat by setting back plant succession to a stage that is beneficial to the species of wildlife being managed," reports Arney.

It is used most effectively in the southern pine forest types and rarely prescribed in hardwood forests. Pines have a thick bark that serves as an insulator against the heat. Burning is also used to reduce pine forest floor litter which lowers the potential of damage from a wildfire in a drought.

"Even though wild turkeys can survive as a species under such a wide diversity of ecological conditions, this does not necessarily mean that they can thrive and produce a shootable surplus under very unfavorable conditions," related Stoddard.

"The kind of frequency of controlled burning desirable in wild turkey and other game management varies with what is desired. 'Gobbler range' should be kept very open and parklike by frequent fires, if the great birds' real preferences are to be met," according to Stoddard. "Hence light fires may be used at intervals of a year or two, in any case at intervals frequent enough largely to keep down deciduous undergrowth and maintain a 'prairie-type' flora composed of grasses, leguminous plants, and other herbaceous types over much of the terrain. . .

"Insects are usually most numerous on the recently burned portions, where they are attracted by the abundant flowers of the leguminous plants. At least these very open parts are most used by the hens and their broods in their

insect catching. Near or dispersed in this 'gobbler range' should be areas of heavier cover — usually brushy spots several acres in extent such as are preferred for concealing cover by the hens and growing broods. Burning should be at longer intervals in such areas."

Arney said in 1978 that no alternative had been developed that could compete with fire from the standpoint of benefits,

One of man's Oldest Tools

practicality, and cost.

"Other treatments such as disking and chopping may cost from \$50 to \$100 per acre, and repeated use of chemicals may have a long-term adverse affect on the environment. Prescribed burning, however, can be done for about \$3 to \$6 per acre," according to Arney. Stoddard also noted a similar cost comparison in 1963.

Both agreed that prescribed or

controlled burning is an ecologically desirable and economically sound management practice, but a complex tool to be done under the direct supervision of a professional land manager trained and experienced in its use.

Son and Father Tie in Contest

Tom Drake, a Columbus, Georgia, teenager, took home a trophy from the Grand National Wild Turkey Calling competition, junior division, in New Orleans. His father Joe also took home a trophy for placing in the senior division.

A father and son in a calling contest is nothing new—other fathers and sons have competed and sometimes the sons have fared better.

But Joe, a member of the Quaker Boy Team, and son Tom both took honors for the same position in the contest—fourth place.

How's that for keeping the record straight?

The winner in the junior division was Dixon Herman of Hickory, NC; first runner-up, Dewan Salter, Evergreen, AL; second runner-up, Drew Jones, DeSoto, MO; and third runner-up, Steve Kazmierski, Lake City, FL.



A back fire is started along a fire land or fire break made to contain the prescribed burn within certain land limits. Fires like this burn slowly together against the wind and die out when the fuel is burned off the surface of the soil.

U. S. Forest Service

A Trick Learned From the Indians

An old corn cob and a piece of rough slate might not sound like the elements of a successful turkey hunting story but those of us who are familiar with an old Indian trick would certainly agree they are. Yes, that's right. I did say an old Indian trick.

One of the most dependable turkey calls, as well as one of the oldest known, is the very simple slate and peg.

The Indians were perhaps the first to realize the magic of the sweet notes it produces, but it wasn't long until turkey hunters began to lure their trophies to the gun with those sweet notes.

Perhaps no other call produces the soft tree calls, cluck, and purrs of a well tuned slate. Turkey hunters today have learned that this is one type of call not to be without.

Call manufacturers have developed this simple slate into single slates, double slates, slates with hoies in them and even replaced the slate with aluminum.

But above and beyond all of this, the basic rules for using the slate call are the same:

The hunter must master the art of dragging the wooden or plexiglass stricker across the surface of the slate. The way the slate is held will then determine the quality of sound produced.

It sounds very simple and it really is, but as with all calls, practice makes perfect is still the rule. — CB.



Gene Smith, *Turkey Call* editor, gives some pointers on the use of a slate call to Jeff Grann, son of Doug Grann, NWTF director of operations.

Doug Grann

First-Timers Get A Patch

Patrick Sullivan, a JAKES member from Erie, PA, has been appointed Youth Committee Member for the PA State Chapter, NWTF. This is the first time such a position has been created in Pennsylvania.

Taking his first status a step further, Patrick created a program which will pay tribute "to its youthful members who have, in a sportsmanlike manner, harvested their first wild turkey."

Pat designed a JAKES Award Patch, a first time only patch, to signify that a youth member has successfully taken his, or her, first wild turkey.

Current Pennsylvania JAKES members are asked to complete an application available from the state chapter and include a photograph of the first trophy to be eligible to receive a patch.

For more information on establishing such a program in your state, contact Patrick Sullivan, 811 East Grandview Blvd., Erie, PA 16504.

Pinfeathers is the official quarterly publication for the JAKES (youth) program of the National Wild Turkey Federation, 1984. National Wild Turkey Federation, Inc. All rights reserved. Edited by Mary Kenamer.

Defensive Hunting Booklet Available

A "Defensive Turkey Hunting" booklet has just been published by the National Wild Turkey Federation. It is a pocket-size camouflaged edition containing ten commandments for safe turkey hunting.

The booklets are being made available to chapters, state game and fish agencies and others connected with turkey hunting clinics.

However, for current JAKES members, a copy has been reserved. To obtain your FREE

copy of "Defensive Turkey Hunting" send us an envelope that is addressed to you and has a 20¢ stamp on it, a SASE as they are called. We will send you the booklet in that envelope.

Read it, study it, discuss the ten commandments with your parents, family and friends. Then keep it handy to refer to each season before going into the woods again. And be sure to share it with each new hunter you meet.

Pinfeathers JAKES

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